

House Republican Press Release

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Rep. Boucher Congratulates Callan Walsh, Wilton HS Student, on Appointment to State Board of Education



State Rep. Toni Boucher congratulated Callan Walsh, a senior at Wilton High School, on being appointed by Governor M. Jodi Rell to serve a one-year term on the Connecticut State Board of Education, the State's highest educational authority.

Rep. Boucher added that Ms. Walsh was appointed for her outstanding academic ability and involvement in extensive athletic, musical and extracurricular activities. Ms. Walsh was appointed along with Tori Hendrix of Thomaston

Rep. Boucher said, "Callan 'Callie' Walsh has earned a reputation for leadership qualities far beyond her years and the respect of her peers. I am so pleased that she will be taking her experiences and perspective to such an important executive board of the state, a state that is renowned for educational quality."

"I also know from my own experience as a previous member of the State Board of Education, that Ms. Walsh will learn much more than she can imagine. She will gain first-hand knowledge and develop a deeper understanding of the accomplishments and challenges of the many diverse school systems throughout the 169 towns and cities of Connecticut."

"There were reservations expressed when the bill was proposed that students be added to the State Board of Education, when I first served on the Education Committee of the legislature. Those reservations have proved unfounded, and the expanded board has worked very well over the years."

In making the appointment, Governor Rell said, "Student members provide an important perspective about the quality of our schools. I know these outstanding young people will make great contributions to the board. I think they will add energy to our discussions on a range of educational issues."

State Education Commissioner Dr. Betty Sternberg said, "I look forward to working with these two very accomplished young women. They will help us to better understand how we can better serve students' needs."

Rep. Boucher added, "I am particularly delighted with the choice of Ms. Walsh as a new member of the state board as I have a great deal of pride in our community and its schools system and am elated to see our talent being utilized for the benefit of so many others. I have hoped for some time that one of our Wilton High School students would represent us on my favorite state board. Looking back over the years, next to serving on the Wilton Board of Education, time spent on the State Board of Education was one of the most rewarding experiences I have ever had. It is to everyone's benefit to share the intellectual resources that our community has in abundance and also to bring back 'best practices' from other areas of our state."

The State Board of Education has general supervision and control over the educational interests of the state, including preschool through adult education, curriculum and instruction, teacher preparation, and research and evaluation. It also serves as the board of education for the state's 17 regional vocational-technical schools. Connecticut has 166 public school districts serving over 570,000 students. The Board has oversight over a \$1.3 billion budget, primarily consisting of grants to school districts. The Board works closely with the Governor, General Assembly, Commissioner of Education and local boards of education.

The student members will join the State Board of Education for its first meeting of the school year on September 8, 2004 at 9:30 A.M. in Room 307 of the State Office Building at 165 Capitol Ave. in Hartford.

Rep. Boucher is planning to meet with Ms. Walsh personally to share observations and experiences as she prepares for this new role.